Code of Behaviour

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore, any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

Responsibility of Adults
The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind *Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'*. A Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers ensures that the rights of the children are upheld.

The basis for our School Rules are

- Respect for self and others
- Respect for other's property
- Respect other students and their learning
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Follow instructions from staff immediately
- Walk quietly in the school building
- Courtesy and good manners
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Ask permission to leave the classroom
- Do your best in class
- Take responsibility for your own work

These can be summed up as 3 main rules:

- Respect Yourself
- Respect Others
- Respect Property/School

Class Rules
At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives
Part of the vision of St. Coen's National School is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually and socially. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Reward systems which are based solely on academic merit apply to only a limited number of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given;

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class or in assembly
- A system of merit marks or stickers
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- Golden Time
- Homework Pass

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Minor Misbehaviour	Serious Misbehaviour	Gross Misbehaviour
• Interrupting class work	• Bullying (Anti-bullying procedures will be followed)	• Ongoing racial abuse
• Running in the building	• Physical threat	• Assault
• Littering around the school	• Verbal threat	• Serious or ongoing verbal abuse *incl. cursing at staff*
• Being discourteous or unmannerly	• Name calling	• Vandalism to school property or personal property
• Not completing homework without good reason (failure to include a note)	• Having a phone or wearable device or smart device	• Any persistent serious misbehaviours
• Talking out of turn	• Leaving yard/class without permission	• Stealing
• Not wearing appropriate uniform	• Defiance	• Serious threat of violence
• Using chewing gum	• Recurring disobedience	• Supplying illegal drugs
• Disobedience	• Rough contact e.g. headlock/pushing/shoving	• Spitting at someone
• Spitting	• Lying and misinformation	• Smoking/Vaping

Sanctions

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Group punishment should be avoided
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Behavioural Steps for Minor Misbehaviours in the Classroom

Warning Stage:

- Before any formal steps are taken the child is provided with a warning by the teacher to stop misbehaving

Step 1:

- If the misbehaviour continues, the child is informed that they are on Step 1

Step 2:

- If the misbehaviour continues, the child is warned a further time and informed that they are on Step 2. The teacher may use a visual aid such as a behaviour ladder to indicate this to the student.

Step 3:

- If misbehaviour continues, the child is now sent to the Reflection Table in their classroom. They will complete a Reflection log at the Reflection Table. This log will be sent home that day and must be returned signed the next morning. In the event that the form is not returned the parents will receive a call home from the Principal.

Principal Involvement

Step 4:

- This step arises where the child continues to misbehave or disrupt class, or if a child doesn't appropriately fill in the reflection log.
- At this point a messenger is sent to the office to call the Principal.
- The Principal collects the child for a meeting in his office.
- The Principal makes a judgement on whether the child returns to their classroom.

In the case of a **Serious Misbehaviour** the child will go straight to **Step 3** of the behavioural steps.

In the case of a **Gross Misbehaviour** the child will go straight to **Step 4** of the behavioural step.

Time spent at Reflection Tables:

Junior and Senior Infants:	5- 10mins at Reflection Table
1st and 2nd Class:	10-20mins at Reflection Table
3rd and 4th Class:	15-25mins at Reflection Table
5th and 6th Class:	20-30mins at Reflection Table

Every day is a fresh start but teacher keeps a written record.

Consequences of accumulating reflection sheets in a month period:

- 1 sheet in a week = detention for one break
- Any subsequent sheet in a week = detention for one break
- 3 sheets in a month = letter sent home to be signed by parents/guardians
- 4 sheets in a month = principal – parent/guardian meeting
- 5 sheets in a month = automatic suspension for up to 3 days

Every month is a fresh start for accumulation of reflection sheets but records are kept by Principal.

Yard Behaviour

Step 1: Verbal Warning

Step 2: If minor misbehaviour continues the child is put on Time Out for 5mins

Step 3: If child misbehaves again during break or if the misbehaviour is more serious the child will be off yard for all of the break

Step 4: If the child misbehaves 3 times in a week:

- the child is off yard the following school day or on another section of the yard.
- The Principal speaks to the child and sends record home to be signed

Each week is a fresh start

Suspension and Expulsion (in accordance with NEWB Guidelines)
Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension (internal or external) or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet with the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.
In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, Board authorises Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)
Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Children with Special Needs
All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, SEN teacher and/or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods may be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (infants check bags)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- Monthly newsletter
- Text messages
- School website
- Aladdin Connect

This Policy has been reviewed by the Board of Management on the 21/10/2026.

Signed:- Mary Murphy

Mary Murphy

Chairperson Board of Management

Lee Kavanagh

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Principal